

5-4962 A MAN CALLED
INTREPID: The Secret
P- STEVENSON, William war

The Secret War Against Totalitarians

By EDMUND FULLER

A small, quiet, conservative-looking man arrived in New York City in June of 1940, as a British "passport control officer." He was the next thing to unnoticeable. In fact, he was William Stephenson, Canadian self-made millionaire industrialist with operations as diversified as movie making, radio communications, TV and radar development; he was on the forefront of research and application in electronics and physics. He was a friend of Winston Churchill, though a much younger man.

What this "passport control officer" really was doing in New York, with headquarters in Rockefeller Center, was run-

The Bookshelf

"A Man Called Intrepid: The Secret War"

By William Stephenson. Harcourt Brace Jovanovich. 486 pages. \$12.95.

ning BSC, British Security Coordinations, the hub of the British intelligence system. Stephenson's code name, selected by Churchill, was "Intrepid." He was at the very top of British and later Allied intelligence throughout World War II. At the start his work was known only to Churchill and President Roosevelt, between whom he was a vital link long before we were in the war. Colonel, later General, William J. ("Wild Bill") Donovan was the first American to work with Intrepid under Roosevelt's direction. Donovan later organized OSS when the U.S. was in the war; that agency, in turn, became the CIA.

Intrepid had an assignment of "extraordinary independence and power. He was to direct His Majesty's Secret Intelligence Services and a great deal more. He was to move against the enemy wherever and whenever he saw fit, to take action through covert diplomacy or clandestine agencies without seeking prior approval from the War Cabinet. He would be protected only to the degree that the purpose of his movements would be known to very few." New York was the headquarters of his operations so that, in the all-too-probable-seeming event that the British Isles were overrun by Hitler, unrelenting continued war by all possible means would continue to be directed from the BSC center.

More of this story than has ever been released before, yet still not all of it, is in "A Man Called Intrepid: The Secret War," by William Stephenson. To call it a thriller is an understatement, even though parts of it require great concentration. Mr. Stephenson, the author, also a Canadian, no kin in spite of the similarity of names, served under Intrepid. He became a close friend of the now Sir William Stephenson, who cooperated at every stage of this book, opening his secret files, talking freely, reading the final text, and contributing a Foreword. This book is the real thing, from the top.

Sir William took no salary as Intrepid but rather poured much of his own resources into the struggle. He felt the time had come for this story to be known, in part because of the alarming recent attacks upon the intelligence agencies within the U.S. As with many other necessities of society, there are perils and paradoxes in intelligence gathering and its related activities extending to covert warfare. None of the dangers inherent in it are ignored.

Sir William says: "The totalitarian powers don't have to answer to their own people for the actions of their secret agencies. They don't have newspapers and television probing and watching. Yet they have complete freedom to conduct campaigns in our own world. They have great advantages.

"Our primary defense is more than ever information. And it's in our interests to see that a potential aggressor is aware of our strength and resolve. . . . The campaigns against Western intelligence agencies are fought often with unwitting help from our own citizens, honestly outraged by the excesses of huge sealed organizations with unaccountable budgets. The disclosed failures of these agencies are widely publicized. Their achievements have to be kept secret—or they cease to be effective.

"What is often forgotten is that the worst abuses of power within our democratic societies are exposed by our own people. The spirit of resistance is opposed to all forms of tyranny. We purge ourselves while we resist our enemies. This is the response of a concerned citizenry, knowing freedom is in danger, putting the responsibility for defending it squarely on individuals of honor and good intent."

Beyond this there must be trust. An

open society that ceases for long to trust its leaders and agencies is lost. Trust is always a risk, in public or private matters, but there is no substitute for it. When it is betrayed from time to time, as in human nature it will be, it must be restored again quickly or else worse disaster will ensue.

This reviewer rejects the painful temptation to name famous names often astonishing to encounter here, repeat anecdotes, point to harrowingly graphic dramatic episodes, mention all-but-incredible feats; to cite utter horrors, great dangers, and also to mention menacing triumphs of intelligence activities scored against us by our enemies. All those are here, making this book a gripping thriller with startling disclosures. Those are not what make it urgently important; it is the sober, cautionary aspect that does so.

Again, Sir William: "We are rightly repelled by secrecy; it is a potential threat to democratic principle and free government. Yet we would delude ourselves if we should forget that secrecy was for a time virtually our only defense. It served not only to achieve victory, but also to save lives in that perilous pursuit. . . . It would be infinitely preferable to know exactly how our intelligence agencies function, and why, and where. But this information, once made public, disarms us.

"When the history of World War II is revised in the light of the secret war, this may be the most striking element: the great engines of destruction did not determine the outcome. The invincibility of free people and the ingenuity of free minds did. I believe this as I believe today that the spirit of human resistance refuses to be crushed by mere technology." It is less obvious, but in the balance of nuclear terror, peacetime intelligence may be the only kind that will have a chance to operate. He asks the stern question: "Will the democracies consent to their own survival?" These are the matters that make "A Man Called Intrepid" a grimly important book for concerned citizens to study and ponder.